A Developmental Services Bulletin from the Ministry of Community and Social Services

More residential options for community living

A goal of Ontario's developmental services transformation is to provide adults with a developmental disability with more residential options so they can live more independently within their communities.

During last year's public consultation, we heard examples of creative living arrangements that are working well and we listened to suggestions about innovative residential models and partnerships that could be explored.

> *"The Ministry should encourage partnerships between the ministry, community agencies and parents to develop innovative choices for the individuals that need residential support within the community. It is not a one size fits all — people should be able to live in a home that is "theirs", where they are safe and well cared for, where there is a variety of stimulating programming, where recreational and leisure activities are regular and available ... etc., etc."*
>
> **A parent's comment during the 2006 public consultation**

> *"Your first home isn't your only home. You need to look at different systems and approaches, for example, a model where the person with a developmental disability is progressively more independent because you provide independent living options with supports."*
>
> **A parent's comment during the 2006 public consultation**

We know from the consultation feedback that individuals, families, service providers and other stakeholders are eager to move forward quickly to create more residential options.

In order to make this cornerstone of our transformation a success, we need to put in place a solid foundation — the building blocks of which are a common application tool, application centres, and a funding framework. That's what we are working on now.

Before we introduce other transformation initiatives, we are hoping to tap into the experience of interested individuals (and families) who are receiving ministry-funded residential support or who are prioritized to receive ministry-funded residential support in 2007/08 to develop innovative residential proposals. Your experience and understanding of your communities is vital to creating the next generation of residential options.

Support for innovative residential models

Eligible individuals or their families, together with a service provider, can develop a proposal for an innovative residential model for their community. The proposal must be submitted to their local regional office of the ministry for consideration for funding.

The proposal should:

- describe the residential model;
- describe the roles of the parties proposing the model; and
- describe how it meets the proposal requirements and evaluation criteria.

What does innovative residential model mean?

The term refers to a type of accommodation that has been developed to provide individually-tailored supports to help adults with a developmental disability meet their goal of living more independently (or inter-dependently) in the community. Here are some examples of innovative residential models:

- a home co-ownership situation;
- a rent-to-own arrangement (i.e. where a private investor buys the home or makes the down payment and the individual pays rent towards the mortgage with the intention of eventually becoming the owner);
- a co-operative home; or
- a garden suite.

Evaluating the proposals

The ministry has established criteria to evaluate the proposals. This is to make sure that decisions relating to funding are consistent across the province. Proposals that meet the criteria and fit within a local community's planning requirements, regional capacity and regional targets, will be considered for funding.

Here are the criteria that will be used to review the proposals:

- Intent of the proposal (there is a partnership between the individual, the family and a service provider; the proposal reflects a person-directed approach and was developed collaboratively);
- Fit with community need/community plan (the proposal is consistent with the needs of the community and aligns with the priorities of the community; and the individual currently receives ministry-funded residential support or has been prioritized to receive ministry-funded residential support between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008);
- Governance and accountability (describes the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the proposal; reporting requirements; and compliance with applicable legislation);
- Service provider considerations (factors that the service provider must consider when supporting the proposed innovative residential model. For example, if the proposal is for an individual who is moving from an existing ministry-funded residential space to an innovative model, the lead agency must agree to keep the vacancy open for a period of time to make sure the new living arrangement is suitable and sustainable. The service provider must also agree to continue to provide the support services for the individual, or help to identify a suitable lead agency);
- Funding (how the funding requested will reasonably meet the individual's support requirements and fit with ministry region's residential funding capacity); and
- Sustainability (how the support will be managed over time).

For more information on the evaluation criteria and proposal timelines, please contact your ministry regional office. If you don't know where that is, please visit the ministry website at http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca. Decisions will be made by January 1, 2008.

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In this issue, we are introducing a new feature to answer questions that we've received about developmental services and supports, and the transformation of developmental services.

You Asked Us

Question:

When can students apply for the Passport program?

Answer:

Individuals can apply for Passport prior to leaving school, however, funding will not be offered until individuals have completed school. Updated information is required prior to processing applications. The Application and Administration Procedures for 2007/08 are posted on the Ministry of Community and Social Services website. It provides more information on how applications are processed.

Question:

What is a "Familyhome Provider"?

Answer:

The Familyhome program is a residential support program funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The program provides a family home setting for individuals who may require supervision, prefer living with a family, and who may need the additional support that a family environment can provide.

A Familyhome provider is an adult and/or family who provides accommodation, care, support and supervision for a child or adult with a developmental disability. The provider is affiliated with an agency that offers and coordinates the Familyhome program.

If you are interested in finding out more about this program, you can find a copy of the Familyhome Guidelines under the "Publications" section of the ministry's website at: http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca.

In addition, you may also wish to visit the Familyhome Program Provincial Coordinators' Association website at http://www.familyhomeprovincialprograms.ca.

A Developmental Services Bulletin from the Ministry of Community and Social Services

Greetings from Deputy Minister Lucille Roch

Since arriving at the ministry in June, I have been very impressed with the ambitious and extensive work being done to transform the developmental services sector in Ontario. It is an honour to return to the ministry, where I was formerly Assistant Deputy Minister of Children, Family and Community Services.

I have enjoyed meeting staff, families and their loved ones in my visits across the province and I hope to meet many more of you in the future. The determination, dedication and compassion of everyone in this sector is extraordinary. Your tireless efforts are making a real difference, and not just in developmental services. Inclusiveness and compassion benefit our entire society and your efforts are building richer communities across the province.

Achieving a transformed system is a multi-year endeavour. Over the next year, we will be moving forward with the transformation by continuing the policy work that is currently underway, evaluating the Passport initiative, initiating more pilots to test some new ideas, undertaking the planning activities needed to support a successful transformation, and ensuring that effective measures are in place to facilitate change.

I look forward to getting to know you and the issues that matter to you.

Lucille Roch
Deputy Minister

Ontario